

108TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 778

Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of William “Count” Basie and acknowledging his important contributions to jazz and swing music.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 17, 2004

Mr. PALLONE (for himself, Ms. McCARTHY of Missouri, and Mr. RANGEL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of William “Count” Basie and acknowledging his important contributions to jazz and swing music.

Whereas on August 21, 1904, renowned pianist and bandleader William “Count” Basie was born in Red Bank, New Jersey;

Whereas in 1924, William “Count” Basie moved to New York City and, under the influence of James P. Johnson and Thomas “Fats” Waller, learned the style of piano known as stride piano, a contrasting constant beat from the left hand with a melodious right hand;

Whereas in 1927, William “Count” Basie’s vibrant musical career took off when he moved to Kansas City, Missouri, and joined Walter Page’s Blue Devils Band;

Whereas William “Count” Basie joined the Bennie Morton Band, and took over as bandleader in 1935, renaming the band “Count Basie and his Cherry Blossom Orchestra”;

Whereas Count Basie and his Cherry Blossom Orchestra disbanded, but eventually reformed as the “Count Basie Orchestra”;

Whereas the Count Basie Orchestra dominated the realms of jazz and swing for several decades;

Whereas the music of William “Count” Basie and the Count Basie Orchestra solidified the bond between the musical fashion of jazz and the mournful sounds of the blues;

Whereas William “Count” Basie and the Count Basie Orchestra established swing as a predominant force in the musical tastes of generations;

Whereas the music of William “Count” Basie maintained a lightness and precision that has set the tone for modern jazz accompanying styles;

Whereas William “Count” Basie perfected a style of piano known as comping, a syncopated and highly precise style of chords on the piano;

Whereas William “Count” Basie’s most famous pieces included “One O’clock Jump”, “Swingin’ the Blues”, “Jumpin’ at the Woodside”, “April in Paris”, “Shiny Stockings”, and “Every Day I Have the Blues”;

Whereas in 1983, William “Count” Basie was awarded an American Jazz Masters Award by the National Endowment for the Arts;

Whereas in 1984, in honor of William “Count” Basie’s accomplishments, an historic theater in his hometown of

Red Bank, New Jersey, was renamed the “Count Basie Theatre”;

Whereas in 1996, the United States Postal Service issued a commemorative postage stamp in honor of William “Count” Basie;

Whereas the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences awarded William “Count” Basie 9 Grammy Awards throughout his career, as well as the Grammy Trustees Award in 1981, and the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2002; and

Whereas William “Count” Basie passed away on April 26, 1984, leaving his music and the Count Basie Orchestra as vivid reminders of his brilliant talent and influential career: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) commemorates the 100th anniversary of the
3 birth of William “Count” Basie; and

4 (2) acknowledges the important contributions of
5 William “Count” Basie to jazz and swing music.

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